

What Is Claimed Is:

1. An interactive program guide system with which a user may purchase pay television programs, comprising user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide application is implemented that:

provides the user with an opportunity to select a program for purchase;

determines whether the selected program is part of a package of pay programs containing a finite plurality of pay programs, wherein the pay programs in the package of pay programs are not the same programs that are available for purchase by subscribing to a channel for its minimum subscription duration; and

displays information on the package of which the selected program is a part when the selected program is a part of a package so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package.

2. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the pay programs in the package are not contiguous.

3. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the interactive television program guide application determines whether the selected program is part of a single package, whether the selected program is part of multiple packages, and whether the selected program is purchasable individually.

4. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 3 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays purchasing information for the selected program when the selected program is purchasable individually.

5. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 3 wherein the interactive television program guide application lists all pay program package options when the selected program is part of multiple packages.

6. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the interactive television program guide application provides the user with an opportunity to purchase the package.

7. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 6 wherein the interactive television program guide application determines whether the purchased package contains repetitive programming.

8. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 7 wherein the interactive television program guide application automatically sets program reminders for all programs in the purchased package when the package is determined not to contain repetitive programming.

9. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 7 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

provides the user with an opportunity to set a reminder for a given one of the programs in the purchased package when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming;

automatically sets program reminders for all programs in the purchased package subsequent to the given one of the programs when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming; and

monitors whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

10. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 9 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a reminder for each program in the package when the user is determined not to have watched any programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

11. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 9 wherein the interactive television program guide application cancels the remainder of the automatically-set reminders when the user is determined to have watched one of the programs in the purchased package.

12. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 6 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

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monitors whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package; and
cancels the purchase of the purchased package when it is determined that the user has not watched any of the programs in the purchased package.

13. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 12 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a message informing the user that the user will not be billed for the cancelled package.

14. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 12 wherein the interactive television program guide application offers the user an opportunity to reschedule the cancelled package.

15. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a telephone number and time window for ordering the package when the package is not impulse purchasable.

16. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the interactive television program guide application provides the user with an opportunity to impulse purchase the package from the program guide.

17. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 1 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

provides the user with an opportunity to select a channel for which a subscription is to be purchased;

determines whether the selected channel is part of a package of pay channels; and

displays information on the package of pay channels of which the selected channel is a part when the selected channel is a part of a package of pay channels so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package of pay channels.

18. A method for providing a user with pay programs for purchase with an interactive television program guide system, comprising:

providing the user with an opportunity to select a program for purchase;

determining whether the selected program is part of a package of pay programs containing a finite plurality of pay programs, wherein the pay programs in the package of pay programs are not the same programs that are available for purchase by subscribing to a channel for its minimum subscription duration; and

displaying information on the package of which the selected program is a part when the selected program is a part of a package so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package.

19. The method defined in claim 18 wherein the pay programs in the package are not contiguous.

20. The method defined in claim 18 further comprising:

determining whether the selected program is part of a single package;

determining whether the selected program is part of multiple packages; and

determining whether the selected program is purchasable individually.

21. The method defined in claim 20 further comprising displaying purchasing information for the selected program when the selected program is purchasable individually.

22. The method defined in claim 20 further comprising listing all pay program package options when the selected program is part of multiple packages.

23. The method defined in claim 18 further comprising providing the user with an opportunity to purchase the package.

24. The method defined in claim 23 further comprising determining whether the purchased package contains repetitive programming.

25. The method defined in claim 24 further comprising the step of automatically setting program reminders for all programs in the purchased package when the package is determined not to contain repetitive programming.

26. The method defined in claim 24 further comprising:

providing the user with an opportunity to set a reminder for a given one of the programs in the purchased package when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming;

automatically setting program reminders for all programs in the purchased package subsequent to the given one of the programs when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming; and

monitoring whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

27. The method defined in claim 26 further comprising displaying a reminder for each program in the package when the user is determined not to have watched any programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

28. The method defined in claim 26 further comprising cancelling the remainder of the automatically-set reminders when the user is determined to have watched one of the programs in the purchased package.

29. The method defined in claim 23 further comprising:

monitoring whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package; and
cancelling the purchase of the purchased package when it is determined that the user has not watched any of the programs in the purchased package.

30. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising displaying a message informing the user that the user will not be billed for the cancelled package.

31. The method defined in claim 29 further comprising offering the user an opportunity to reschedule the cancelled package.

32. The method defined in claim 18 further comprising displaying a telephone number and time window for ordering the package when the package is not impulse purchasable.

33. The method defined in claim 18 further comprising impulse purchasing the package from the program guide.

34. The method defined in claim 18 further comprising:

providing the user with an opportunity to select a channel for which a subscription is to be purchased;

determining whether the selected channel is part of a package of pay channels; and

displaying information on the package of pay channels of which the selected channel is a part

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when the selected channel is a part of a package of pay channels so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package of pay channels.

35. An interactive program guide system with which a user may purchase pay television programs, comprising user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide application is implemented that:

provides the user with an opportunity to select an individually-purchasable pay program for purchase;

determines whether the selected individually-purchasable pay program is part of a package of pay programs; and

displays information on the package of which the selected individually-purchasable pay program is a part when the selected individually-purchasable pay program is a part of a package so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package.

36. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 35 wherein the interactive television program guide application determines whether the selected individually-purchasable pay program is part of a single package and whether the selected individually-purchasable pay program is part of multiple packages.

37. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 36 wherein the interactive television program guide application lists all pay program package

options when the selected individually-purchasable pay program is part of multiple packages.

38. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 35 wherein the interactive television program guide application provides the user with an opportunity to purchase the package.

39. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 38 wherein the interactive television program guide application determines whether the purchased package contains repetitive programming.

40. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 39 wherein the interactive television program guide application automatically sets program reminders for all programs in the purchased package when the package is determined not to contain repetitive programming.

41. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 39 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

provides the user with an opportunity to set a reminder for a given one of the programs in the purchased package when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming;

automatically sets program reminders for all programs in the purchased package subsequent to the given one of the programs when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming; and

monitors whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package for which

the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

42. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 41 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a reminder for each program in the package when the user is determined not to have watched any programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

43. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 41 wherein the interactive television program guide application cancels the remainder of the automatically-set reminders when the user is determined to have watched one of the programs in the purchased package.

44. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 38 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

monitors whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package; and

cancels the purchase of the purchased package when it is determined that the user has not watched any of the programs in the purchased package.

45. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 44 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a message informing

the user that the user will not be billed for the cancelled package.

46. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 44 wherein the interactive television program guide application offers the user an opportunity to reschedule the cancelled package.

47. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 35 wherein the interactive television program guide application displays a telephone number and time window for ordering the package when the package is not impulse purchasable.

48. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 35 wherein the interactive television program guide application provides the user with an opportunity to impulse purchase the package from the program guide.

49. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 35 wherein the interactive television program guide application:

provides the user with an opportunity to select a channel for which a subscription is to be purchased;

determines whether the selected channel is part of a package of pay channels; and

displays information on the package of pay channels of which the selected channel is a part when the selected channel is a part of a package of pay channels so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package of pay channels.

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50. A method for providing a user with pay programs for purchase with an interactive television program guide system, comprising:

51. The method defined in claim 50 further comprising:

52. The method defined in claim 51 further comprising listing all pay program package options when the selected individually-purchasable pay program is part of multiple packages.

54. The method defined in claim 53 further comprising determining whether the purchased package contains repetitive programming.

55. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising automatically setting program reminders for all programs in the purchased package when the package is determined not to contain repetitive programming.

56. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising:

providing the user with an opportunity to set a reminder for a given one of the programs in the purchased package when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming;

automatically setting program reminders for all programs in the purchased package subsequent to the given one of the programs when the package is determined to contain repetitive programming; and

monitoring whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

57. The method defined in claim 56 further comprising displaying a reminder for each program in the package when the user is determined not to have watched any programs in the purchased package for which the program reminders were automatically set when the package was determined to contain repetitive programming.

58. The method defined in claim 56 further comprising cancelling the remainder of the automatically-set reminders when the user is determined to have watched one of the programs in the purchased package.

59. The method defined in claim 53 further comprising:

monitoring whether the user has watched any of the programs in the purchased package; and

cancelling the purchase of the purchased package when it is determined that the user has not watched any of the programs in the purchased package.

60. The method defined in claim 59 further displaying a message informing the user that the user will not be billed for the cancelled package.

61. The method defined in claim 59 further comprising offering the user an opportunity to reschedule the cancelled package.

62. The method defined in claim 50 further comprising displaying a telephone number and time window for ordering the package when the package is not impulse purchasable.

63. The method defined in claim 50 further comprising impulse purchasing the package from the program guide.

64. The method defined in claim 50 further comprising:

providing the user with an opportunity to select a channel for which a subscription is to be purchased;

determining whether the selected channel is part of a package of pay channels; and

displaying information on the package of pay channels of which the selected channel is a part when the selected channel is a part of a package of pay channels so that the user may decide whether to purchase the package of pay channels.

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